



## DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE

65TH MEDICAL GROUP (USAF)  
LAJES FIELD AZORES PORTUGAL

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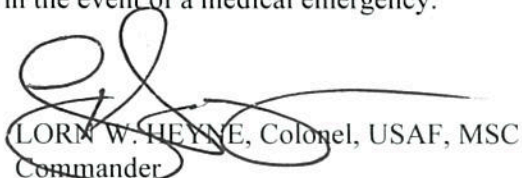
Dear fellow Airman,

Congratulations on your assignment to Lajes Field on the island of Terceira. I'm sure that you'll find the scenery beautiful and the culture of our host nation warm and inviting. As the commander of the 65th Medical Group, I am charged with ensuring access to the highest quality healthcare services for our patients. We do this through a combination of in-house care and referrals to the local national network of specialty providers. If the required specialty care isn't available on-island, we arrange "patient travel" to the nearest off-island host nation capability, or military treatment facility (MTF) in Germany, England, or CONUS. By leveraging each of these tools, we ensure access to the full spectrum of healthcare services and like any other location it is provided at no charge to our Tricare Prime patients.

Lajes is designated as a remote/unaccompanied location, but some Airmen still choose to bring their family members. If you are considering this, keep in mind that non-command sponsored family members living OCONUS are only eligible for Tricare Standard benefits. We will still offer no-cost care to your family members in the MTF, but only on a Space-Available basis and our capabilities are extremely limited. If your family member receives care from a host nation provider they should pre-coordinate the visit with the Tricare contractor *International SOS* (ISOS), and in all cases they must pay for services upfront and then file an insurance claim for reimbursement. Also, there is no patient travel benefit, so your family member will bear any off-island travel related expenses. Finally, under Tricare Standard you will pay an annual deductible of \$150 per family member/\$300 per family, and a 20% cost-share up to the \$1,000 per family/per year. This applies to all services whether routine, urgent, or emergent.

If your family remains in CONUS but visits during your tour, their Tricare enrollment status travels with them. So "Prime" at home, is "Prime" here and in most cases urgent care is pre-coordinated through ISOS and will be paid in full by Tricare. All emergent care is coordinated through ISOS after care is obtained. In almost all cases, however, expenses for routine medical visits to anyone other than the assigned Primary Care Manager (PCM), or for care not referred by the PCM is subject to Tricare Standard reimbursement terms. The bottom line, encourage your family to take care of all routine medical needs, before they visit you at Lajes Field.

Terceira is a wonderful location and I hope that you're able to share it with your family. If they come, keep in mind that we have limited capabilities in our MTF and a well-developed local national network that, if used by non-command sponsored family members may include out-of-pocket expenses. If you have questions, visit the Tricare Benefit Services Representative (BSR) at your current duty station, or go on-line at [www.tricare.mil](http://www.tricare.mil). If nothing else, please contact our BSR at DSN 314-535-2262, but get educated about your family's Tricare benefit *before* they join you at Lajes Field. This simple step may save you and your family confusion and financial hardship in the event of a medical emergency.

  
LORN W. HEYNE, Colonel, USAF, MSC  
Commander